

Remarks/Arguments:

This amendment accompanies a request for continued examination (RCE).

In the final rejection, the examiner required applicant to deal with claim 6 in one of three ways. We have elected to place claim 6 in independent form, to avoid the rejection of claims 6 and 7 under 35 USC 112.

The system of O'Callaghan *et al.* includes a printer (104) for printing identification information on each mail piece, and a camera (105) for, *inter alia*, verifying a barcode. However, contrary to the claimed invention, the camera (105) is operative to scan a barcode *prior to* operation of the printer (104). See, for example, column 4, lines 36 and 37.

O'Callaghan *et al.* does not disclose or suggest a system which imprints a mail piece with a postal indicium, and *subsequently* scans that mail piece to generate an indication of a presence of that imprint, as required by claim 6. We have carefully reviewed the reference, particularly the passages identified by the examiner. Other than possibly at col. 5, line 10 et seq., we find nothing to suggest that O'Callaghan tests for the presence of postal indicia, and even if it does, there is no description of what happens if no indicia is discovered. Certainly there is no suggestion of generating an indication of the presence of an imprint of a postal indicium on detecting a transition following a predetermined number of transitions, as required by claims 3, 6 and 8, or of stopping the feeding of mail pieces if no indicium is found, as recited in claim 7.

We believe that the claims now presented are patentable over the prior art of record, and that this application is in proper condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles W. Fallow

Charles W. Fallow

Reg. No. 28,946

Shoemaker and Mattare, Ltd.
10 Post Office Road
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 589-8900

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